

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 01839 250917Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 250902Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5345

INFO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 1839

EXDIS

DEPT PLS PASS INFO CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLADAND SECDEF WASHDC

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ANZUS, MNUC, PARM, NZ

SUBJ: SOUTH PACIFIC NUCLEAR FREE ZONE (SPNFZ)

REF: A) CANBERRA 1637; B) WELLINGTON 720

1. ACCORDING TO SECRETARY FOREIGN AFFAIRS RENOUF, WHITLAM AND ROWLING DISCUSSED SPNFZ AT SOME LENGTH DURING CANBERRA MEETINGS MARCH 24. IN ORDER TO DEFUSE TOPIC, WHITLAM MADE LENGTHY PRESENTATION ON IMPORTANCE OF STRATEGIC ALLIANCE WITH U.S., EMPHASIZING THAT AFTER HARD WORK WITHIN LABOR PARTY HE HAD MANAGED TO CONFIRM CONTINUING PRESENCE OF US DEFENSE FACILITIES IN AUSTRALIA. WHITLAM THEN RAISED SPNFZ AND SAID AUSTRALIA DID NOT WISH TO CREATE DIFFICULTIES OR FRICTIONS WITH U.S.

2. ROWLING THEN REFERRED TO EFFECTIVE JOINT AUSTRALIAN-NEW ZEALAND ACTION IN OPPOSITION TO FRENCH NUCLEAR TESTS AND SAID HE HOPED TWO GOVERNMENTS COULD CONTINUE TO COLLABORATE ON NUCLEAR MATTERS. HE ARGUED IN FAVOR OF SPNFZ FORMULA ALONG LINES RECENTLY DRAFTED BY GNZ (REFTELS). WHITLAM URGED ROWLING NOT RPT NOT TO RAISE THIS MATTER AT JAMAICA COMMONWEALTH MEETING OR IN ANZUS TALKS. WHITLAM SAID THAT IF GNZ PROPOSED SPNFZ RESOLUTION IN UN AUSTRALIA WOULD NOT CO-SPONSOR AND WOULD NOT SPEAK IN FAVOR. HOWEVER, LABOR GOA WOULD VOTE FOR VAGUELY WORDED RESOLUTION SUCH AS THAT WHICH APPLIED TO AFRICA LAST YEAR.

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3. ROWLING AGREED THAT GNZ WOULD NOT RAISE ISSUE AT JAMAICA OR WASHINGTON AND WOULD DO SO IN GENERAL TERMS IN NEW YORK.

3. COMMENT: RENOUF WAS DELIGHTED THAT DEPARTMENTS FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE HAD PREVAILED UPON WHITLAM TO TAKE FIRM LINE ON THIS ISSUE. HE SAID WHITLAM HAD SPOKEN MOST FORCEFULLY ABOUT IMPORTANCE OF U.S. ALLIANCE AND OF NOT MAKING DIFFICULTIES FOR U.S. RENOUF ADDED THAT CLEAR POSITION TAKEN BY CLEMENTS AND ZURHELLEN HAD BEEN VERY HELPFUL IN STRENGTHENING WHITLAM'S BACK. AUSTRALIAN PRESS OF MARCH 25 REPORTS WITH SOME PROMINENCE THAT WHITLAM REBUFFED ROWLING ON SPNFZ. WE HAD BETTER KEEP AFTER THIS, PERHAPS AT ANZUS TALKS, TO SEE HOW ROWLING'S "VAGUELY WORDED UN RESOLUTION" WILL IN FACT BE WORDED. PERHAPS WITH MORE PRESSURE FROM BOTH US AND GOA HE CAN BE PERSUADED TO GIVE IT UP ALTOGETHER.
HARROP

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NUCLEAR FREE ZONES, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, NUCLEAR TESTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CANBER01839
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750103-0800
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750319/aaaaaqxs.tel
Line Count: 78
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 CANBERRA 1637, 75 WELLINGTON 720
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 JUL 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <03 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUTH PACIFIC NUCLEAR FREE ZONE (SPNFZ)
TAGS: MNUC, PARM, NZ, ANZUS, (ROWLING, WALLACE), (WHITLAM, GOUGH)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006